UNITED NATIONS **A**

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/RES/46/235
20 July 1992

Forty-sixth session
Agenda item 137

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/46/L.57/Rev.1)]

46/235. Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolutions 45/177 of 19 December 1990 and 45/264 of 13 May 1991 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields,

1. Adopts the text contained in the annex to the present resolution;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to implement the proposed restructuring measures as contained in the annex to the present resolution and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session on the action he has taken.

84th plenary meeting
13 April 1992

ANNEX

Background

1. At its resumed forty-fifth session, the General Assembly, in the annex to its resolution 45/264 of 13 May 1991, agreed that a review of the functioning of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and of the General Assembly should take place during the forty-sixth session of the Assembly. In the same resolution, the Assembly underlined the objectives of the overall exercise as being the enhancement of the effective and efficient functioning of the intergovernmental machinery of the United Nations system in the economic, social and related fields in order to be more responsive to the needs of enhancing international economic cooperation and promoting the development of the developing countries.

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2. The review at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly should be carried out with the objective of possible restructuring and revitalization, and the review of their reporting responsibilities and procedures should be carried out with a view to avoiding duplication, where possible. The review should be on the basis of the criteria listed in paragraph 6 (3) of the annex to resolution 45/264.

Framework

3. Some consideration has been given to the restructuring and revitalization of the subsidiary machinery in the social and related fields in the United Nations. Similar attention should be given to the restructuring and revitalization of the subsidiary machinery of the economic sector of the United Nations, with a view to its strengthening.

4. In accordance with the basic principles and guidelines for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields outlined in resolution 45/264, the following common understanding should guide the entire exercise of the restructuring and revitalization of the subsidiary bodies, with the aim of adopting measures to sustain and strengthen the quality and impact of the output of these bodies:

(a) The issues of which the subsidiary bodies are seized are of vital importance to Member States, especially for the development of developing countries;

(b) The ability of the United Nations system to deal more effectively with such vital issues should help to enhance its relevance and credibility in the economic, social and related fields;

(c) Activities in pursuance of these issues must be implemented in an effective and efficient manner in order to enhance international economic cooperation and to promote, in particular, the development of developing countries;

(d) Subsidiary bodies should provide the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as principal organs of the United Nations responsible for system-wide policies in the economic, social and related fields, with high quality advice on relevant issues, through analysis and appropriate policy recommendations or options, in order to enable them to guide future work in the United Nations, develop common policies and agree on appropriate actions;

(e) The composition of each subsidiary body that does not have universal participation must be determined with due regard to equitable geographical representation. Members will be eligible for re-election;

(f) In cases where Governments or government-nominated experts are elected to subsidiary bodies, the experts should possess the necessary qualifications and professional or scientific knowledge. Travel and/or daily subsistence allowance to cover the participation of experts shall be financed from the regular budget in accordance with established rules;

(g) No single or uniform approach to restructuring and revitalization is applicable to all subsidiary bodies. Each body must be reviewed on its own merits through an open and thorough process.

Reporting procedures for subsidiary bodies

5. The Economic and Social Council should provide guidance to and follow up the work of its subsidiary bodies whose reports should contain clear and cogent recommendations and proposals to facilitate their consideration by a revitalized Economic and Social Council in a substantive and integrated manner.

Subsidiary bodies identified for restructuring and revitalization

6. Regional commissions:

The regional commissions should be enabled fully to play their role under the authority of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Their effectiveness should be strengthened. The regional commissions, particularly those located in developing countries, should also be strengthened in terms of their activities and participation in operational activities of the United Nations system, bearing in mind the overall objectives of the restructuring and the revitalization process and taking into account paragraph 3 (h) of the annex to General Assembly resolution 45/264. In this context, the regional commissions are requested to provide recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

7. Other subsidiary bodies:

(a) Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development

(i) Name: Commission on Science and Technology for Development (New York)

The Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development and its subsidiary body, the Advisory Committee on Science and Technology for Development, will be transformed into a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council.

Such functional commission should examine at its first session the question of funding arrangements and the modalities for the convening of ad hoc panels/workshops which will meet intersessionally to examine specific issues of science and technology for development within the framework of General Assembly resolutions 34/218 of 19 December 1979 and 41/183 of 8 December 1986. In this connection, the Commission could consider the practice of the Advisory Committee on Science and Technology for Development.

(ii) Membership and participation: fifty-three members elected by the Economic and Social Council for a term of four years. Travel expenses shall be paid by the United Nations for one representative of each of the Member States participating in the Commission.

(iii) Primary programme objective: as stipulated in General Assembly resolutions 34/218 and 41/183.

(iv) Nature of output and reporting procedure: report to the Economic and Social Council with policy options and recommendations.

(v) Frequency and duration of meetings: the Commission will meet once every two years for two weeks.

(vi) Secretariat support: the Department of Economic and Social Development will serve the Commission and Member States, in particular developing countries, effectively.

(b) Committee on Natural Resources

(i) Name: Committee on Natural Resources (New York)

(ii) Membership and participation: twenty-four government-nominated experts from different Member States, who possess the necessary qualifications and professional or scientific knowledge, who will act in their personal capacities, elected by the Economic and Social Council for a four-year term. Travel expenses and daily subsistence allowance shall be paid by the United Nations for each member of the Committee.

The Committee will have two working groups, one on minerals, and one on water resources.

(iii) Primary programme objective: current mandate of the Committee on Natural Resources pertaining to minerals and water resources.

The mandate of the Committee on Natural Resources in respect of energy will be assumed by the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development (see (c) below).

(iv) Nature of output and reporting prccedure: report to the Economic and Social Council with policy options and recommendations.

(v) Frequency and duration of meetings: the Committee will meet once every two years for two weeks.

(vi) Secretariat support: the Department of Economic and Social Development and any other relevant existing entities of the Secretariat.

(c) Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy

(i) Name: Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development (New York)

(ii) Membership and participation: twenty-four government-nominated experts from different Member States, who possess the necessary qualifications and professional or scientific knowledge, who will act in their personal capacities, elected by the Economic and Social Council for a four-year term. Travel expenses and daily subsistence allowance shall be paid by the United Nations for each member of the Committee.

(iii) Primary programme objective: the Committee will retain the current mandate of the Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy, including the consideration of its relation to environment and development.

In addition, it will take over the present mandate of the Committee on Natural Resources pertaining to energy, as defined in Economic and Social Council resolution 1535 (XLIX) of 27 July 1970.

(iv) Nature of output and reporting procedure: report to the Economic and Social Council with policy options and recommendations.

(v) Frequency and duration of meetings: once every two years for two weeks.

(vi) Secretariat support: the existing arrangements for servicing the Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy may be strengthened through consolidation, in accordance with paragraph 6 (4) of the annex to General Assembly resolution 45/264, to provide adequate technical support to the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development.

Future work

8. The specific regional allocation of seats for each of the bodies mentioned above should be decided upon at the next organizational session of the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with paragraph 4 (e) above.

Review

9. Any relevant institutional changes and recommendations by the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development regarding, in particular, the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development, shall be considered at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

10. A review of the implementation of the present exercise, including the consideration of further steps, is to be undertaken during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, in accordance with resolution 45/264.